

## REMARKS

Claims 1, 4-7, 9-31, and 33-44 are pending in the application. All claims stand rejected. By amendment herewith, Claims 1, 9 and 31 are being changed.

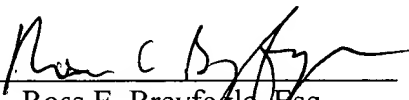
Initially, the undersigned expresses appreciation of Patent Examiner Li and Supervisory Patent Examiner Housel for a telephone interview on October 20, 2003 with the undersigned and Ms. Wren Schauer of RxKinetix, Inc., the assignee of record of this application. In the interview, the outstanding rejections based on 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(e), 102(b) and 103(a) were discussed.

Claim 1 is being amended to accommodate a textual preference of the Examiner that Claim 1 expressly state that the composition is formulated so that the composition exhibits the recited reverse-thermal viscosity behavior, a requirement already implicit in the claim. The amendment to Claim 1 is neither narrowing in scope nor made for any purpose related to patentability. Support for the textual amendment made to Claim 1 finds support, *inter alia*, at page 16, lines 13-18 of the specification. Claims 9 and 31 are being amended to correct obvious typographical errors in the text of those claims. The amendment to each of Claims 9 and 31 is neither narrowing in scope nor made for any purpose related to patentability.

As discussed in the prior-filed Response To Office Action (filed April 28, 2003 by certificate of mailing procedure), the references of record do not disclose or suggest the specific combination of elements and formulation properties recited in the pending claims. Withdrawal of the rejections based on 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(e), 102(b) and 103(a), and issuance of a notice of allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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